

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3319
ANSWERED ON:06.09.2007
SOYABEAN BASED PLASTIC
Kharventhan Shri Salarapatty Kuppusamy

Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government is aware that soyabean-based plastics is biodegradable and can be used for food packaging purposes since it meets food grade standards and environment friendly;
- (b) if so, whether the Government has taken any steps to replace the conventional plastics by soyabean-based plastics and any research has been conducted on it;
- (c) if so, the details thereof; and
- (d) if not, the reasons therefore?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS & MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI B.K. HANDIQUE)

a) Though biodegradable plastics are known to be derived from various renewable agricultural resources including soya proteins, enough data on uses for packaging of food articles is not available.

b), c) & d) : The major use of conventional plastic has been as replacement of more traditional materials like paper, jute, glass etc particularly in packaging due to various properties like light in weight, good barrier properties against water and water borne organisms, retention of aroma and longer shelf life of the food articles to be packed.

The use of biodegradable plastic is limited at present and the main uses presently are limited to compost bags, mulching applications and some packaging applications. Some research projects have been supported by Council of Scientific Development and Research (CSIR) for production of biodegradable polymeric materials. The high cost, problems associated with mixing with normal plastics and limited technical characteristics are the other reasons for limited use of biodegradable plastics.